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Old Mills That Have Ceased to Grind

BY J. STANLEY DURKEE

Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. Jeremiah 25:10.

ONE of the delights of summer wanderings is to discover, in the now out of the way places, old water mills on laughing streams, hidden away behind the hills or far down in the quiet valley. There they stand, often vine-covered, silent, roof fallen in, timbers giving way, the old water wheel in decay. To youth dashing by in a high powered car, the old mill means little. If any thought at all is given to it, such thought is to classify it with other aged and outworn things and people they pity. But to some of us whose lives run back beyond the flashing present, there is a charm, a presence, a voice in the old mill that waken memories of other days and loves. You older men and women will recall a song of those days that releases the voice of the old mill:

I wandered today to the hill, Maggie,
To view the scene below,
The creek and the creaking old mill, Maggie,
Where we sat in the long, long ago.
The green grove is gone from the hill, Maggie,
Where first the daisies sprung;
The old rusty mill is still, Maggie,
Since you and I were young.

I am carrying in thought, at this moment, an old mill by a quiet brook, far back from the rush of modern life. The silver birches, white poplars and fir trees are all friends and come close to the stream to catch reflections of themselves as they bow and curtsy to the gentle winds. I have sometimes fancied that all trees and flowers were feminine, they so love the mirror pool or lake. Here in this old mill I played as a boy, dreamed as a youth and

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planned the long, hard years of the future. The dash of the water, the song of the saws, the buzz of the plainer, the grind of the millstones, are all voices of the long ago. I see the face of the miller, I watch the movement of the mill, I dream again the old dreams as evening comes when the sluice gate is shut and the water wheel stills and the night birds begin to fly.

The old mill has decayed, fallen in and ceased to work. The old millstones have been removed to a country garden and there, at either end of a lovely spruce hedge, hold up lovely flowers for bees, humming birds and lovers' eyes. Sometimes the tears almost start when I see the old millstones now; sometimes I forget the usefulness of its past in the beauty of the present; sometimes I pass them by absorbed in the thoughts of that inner world of the infinite horizons, which is our supreme heritage.

THE WHY OF CHANGE

Why has the old mill gone into decay? Why has the old mill ceased to grind? The same power is present in those falling waters! Indeed the same stone dam holds back millions of tons of water, waiting to be used. The needs of the people who reside in the countryside of the old mill are the same. They must eat and live. The grain still grows on the flat lands, or on the rolling hills. Same power, same needs, same supply—why has the mill ceased to grind? Why? Man has learned a cheaper and better way of meeting his need for bread. Vast acres, thousands on thousands of them, provinces of them, grow the grain. Railroads push their grain cars on the sidings where elevators pour into the cars a golden stream of wheat. Those cars are rushed to the great flour mills where thousands of barrels of flour are daily ground and shipped to every hamlet and village of the country. The old way cannot compete with the new way. The old mill is no match for the new mill. The old mill ceases to grind while the new mill feeds the nation.

How many mills, in every department of living, have ceased to grind, because of the new mill at work! Take it in commerce. What was more graceful, poetic, inspiring, than the clipper ships under full sail? Have you seen them far on the sea, in a freshening wind, at the sunset hour? Such a sight should make a poet out of a politician. But the winds were uncertain. The cargoes could not arrive on schedule. Put an engine in the hold and drive the ship through storm or calm. She is due in port at 10 today. See her come in from the open sea at 9:15 and take her pilot for the dock, up stream! The old ships have gone because of the new ships.

Take it in society. The squire or colonel owned the land, lived in the great house, moved amid the luxuries won from the toil and sweat of peasants or slaves. A kind of god-granted superiority was his. A menial, servile state was theirs. The romance of old colonial days finds its echoes in song and story, popular today. But the very system bred its own destruction. The system was a denial of the very rights which the squire or colonel cherished. "All men are born free and equal." You cannot build a civilization of permanency on anything else. The kingdom of God rests on that foundation. On no other foundation can the kingdom of man rest. Menial tasks there are and they must be performed. But slaves must never perform them; only freemen, who by them can grow to commanding tasks. I worked on the farm, but the farm was a stepping stone. I worked in the mill, but the mill cut a road through for me. I builded houses, but was building with more than wood and stone. The old slave mill ceased, because newer freedom called. The old overlord-ship has gone, because "ye shall call no man Lord." The rule of the multimillionaire is over because the millions of people will have the rewards of their toil.

CHANGE IN RELIGION

Take it in religion. Is it not distressing to note how the message of Jesus has been mistranslated, distorted, and turned completely in on itself! Love has been slowly turned to hate, trust to fear, and brotherhood to war. What systems of fear and fancied hells were built up! How people were frightened into submission to tyrannical ecclesiasticism, and base fears held them in prisons of ignorance! How the desire for power and command led to war and slaughter until rivers of blood ran free and generations were decimated! Yet all this was diametrically opposed to the life and teachings of Jesus. He never used fear or threats of hell to frighten people. He would not permit a sword to be drawn for his cause and kingdom. Men and women were to be won by love and love was to build a brotherhood of souls, thus bringing the kingdom of God to earth. "The love of Christ constrains me," was the cry, not "the fear of hell drives me." We can still hear the creek of the old theological mills as a few of them grind on, but the sound is an advertisement of a departed age.

A missionary from India told me, last summer, of fellow missionaries in India who would not even pray with men of his class because they could not hold the same views of religious truth. A friend of mine in Turkey told me of missionaries there who, because of prejudice, refused to eat with black people. What does Jesus Christ think of them? Isn't it a mark of his greatness that he will use them even to the limit of their small capacities? There are thousands of church members in America, and many preachers, who still fancy that their particular views of life, death, heaven and hell are the only correct views, and therefore they act so un-Christlike in their dealings with fellow church members. What a vast difference there is between church membership and Christlikeness! How strange that followers of Jesus can so lose the road as to call their bypath the only way to heaven!

The old theological mills are ceasing to grind, because the rediscovered truths of Jesus are taking the streams and buying up the best mill privileges. The old mills will cease to grind as the new mills adopt the new truths, which are, after all, the old truths in their true setting and lived in the spirit and love of Jesus Christ.

THE OLD MILL A STEPPING STONE

For a time it seemed as if we were determined to condemn all our traditions, scrap all our convictions, annihilate all our past and march on as if our age had created all and alone had any worth. We laughed at

the old mills, sneered at the old traditions, scorned the old moralities and turned to mob law and the racketeer as the new gods of progress.

But a change has come over our thinking. The wild reactions following the awful days of the war depression have given place to more thoughtful moods. We are in the midst of a renaissance of reverence for the old things that were true and upon which the newer life of today was builded. Young people are discovering that trial marriage is nothing but physical license and the old moralities are still the foundations stones upon which

J. Stanley Durkee

only a real civilization can be builded. Fundamentalists in religion are learning the difference between their particular obsessions and the fundamental teachings of Jesus. Other people than artists are turning back, in love and dream, to the old mills which served their day and generation so faithfully and now rest in peace. We are honoring the old that was true, as we build into the new.

Mr. Henry Ford has made America his debtor forever, because he gathers the old into a vast museum where future generations can study the steps by which our nation climbed to its ever expanding horizons. The things that have helped us to climb are always to be honored. Go into the Smithsonian Institution at Washington and look around you. There is a funny old contraption that might be anything from a calf pen to a chicken coop. Why does the government guard that old, useless relic? Approach and read: "The first airplane used by the Wright brothers." A history began there which ages to come will be expanding. In that case is an old rusty sword; of what use is that? "The sword of General Grant." Ah! you are silent. But over there is an old hat, stovepipe hat it used to be called. You can remember such an old topper in the years agone. What a collection of old clothes and old hats! Why keep these? Come close up to the glass and read: "The hat and clothes of Abraham Lincoln." Ah! An aura gathers about those old clothes that brings a strange and mighty presence back to life.

REVERENCE AND GRATITUDE

I went into the study of Dr. Plumm, one of our grand old Congregational ministers of two generations ago. The picture of a young man was suspended on the wall by a piece of old rope. Strange idea of an old man, was it not? "Take it down and substitute hanging wire! Be up to date and more artistic!" In response to my question he replied, "A piece of the life-line by which that boy of mine was saved from drowning." Ah! The old rope changes! In its place is a life struggle amid the tempest and the rescue by brave men who defy death. This same reverence, magnified, should always be applied to people who have helped us. Why have nations killed their prophets and stoned those who were sent unto them?

Lowell was thinking of Savonarola when he wrote:

> Far in front the cross stands ready,
> And the crackling fagots burn:
> While the hooting mob of yesterday
> In silent awe return
> To glean up the scattered ashes
> Into history's golden urn.

Of all sins, it seems to me that ingratitude is the greatest. St. Paul causes us to see that all sin is based in selfishness. We would take for ourselves no matter what the consequences to others. But selfishness is the outflow of ingratitude. Will a man rob God? Not if the man is full of gratitude to God for his loving kindness and tender mercies. Will a man rob man? Not if the man is full of gratitude to man for what he has contributed to the common cause of living. Some people make stepping stones of other people and then forget them or even insult and crucify them. If there be an unpardonable sin it is not that of immorality, murder or drunkenness. These all may be the outgrowth of false standards and weak wills. The unpardonable sin is that of base ingratitude for help received, for the hand that pulled from the drowning waters. Make a list on paper of those who have helped you to become what you are, and then write them, send them cheer, send them money if need be to help them over some rougher places in life.

WE ARE NOT TO REMAIN BY THE OLD MILL

The old mill served its purpose and ceased to be. But we are to go on into the newer, truer, better, more progressive. Says Browning:

> The things he (man) needed once and
> Needs no more,
> Having grown an inch by
> Are withdrawn: for he hath new needs,
> And new helps to these. . . .
> The ladder rung his foot has left,
> May fall; since all things change
> Save God and Truth.

And Alfred Tennyson expressed this thought in another way:

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

NO REGRETS FOR PROGRESS

So there should be no regrets for the advancement of things. I know how natural it is for us to wish the old years and the old loves back. That kind of nostalgia sometimes grips me with appalling force. I do long for household voices gone, and vanished smiles. I do hear in memory the soft footfall, the opening door, and sense again the presence of her who would make sure I slept, ere she went to rest. But all this, even, is not obliterated. Listen again to Browning:

> All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;
> Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
> Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
> When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
>
> The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
> The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
> Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
> Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear it by and by.

As you look at the old mill you can feel the rush and power of the new mill. The old mill prophesies the new mill. It does not belong there. It belongs here, in this rural spot, beside this quiet stream where the fish dart and the birds sing and the shadows dance and time is not measured in years. Yet this old mill is parent of the new mill, standing there in the city's din, thronged with thousands of workmen and in touch with fields of grain unmeasured.

THE PROPHECY OF THE OLD MILL

Here is the fact: whatever is, is but prophecy of greater things to be. Plato fancied that all things we see and know are but prototypes of the real things that are. Plato was doubtless mistaken in his theory of things, but he was contacting with a great truth in fact. Whatever is, is but an introduction to what may be. The carrying power of the human voice extends only a short distance. Add a megaphone to that voice and it more than doubles its reach. Add a telephone and you speak to a continent. Add a microphone and you speak to the whole world and possibly to other worlds than this. Yet these wonders are but introductory. Greater things than these shall ye see, because at God's right hand are possibilities for man, limitless for eternities.

If this be true for material things, how much more is it true for spiritual things. Jesus Christ brought to his students great, new truths regarding life on earth and its eternal significance. He revealed in himself a power to overcome weakness and sin in himself and others. Peter caught the first great gleam of that truth. One by one, eleven of the twelve students caught it. Transformed by it, they went out to lead others to the transforming. The Church of God on earth thus began and grew. But the church is not the kingdom of God and never will be. The church was but the school in which men and women would be trained in the power of Jesus Christ, that they might go out and transform civilization into its noblest attainment. That noblest attainment was pictured by Jesus when he prayed, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The law of civilization shall be the love of God. The relations of men and women shall be those of family love. The development of civilization shall be the right of all as the might of each. The kingdoms of this world shall become the one kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. What an earth this would be if civilization were as Jesus Christ would have it be! What a dream it is of great souls! How impossible it seems, when we view our world as it is! Will peace ever destroy war, and war makers become heralds of peace? Not until we change our war colleges into peace colleges and cease educating men to war!

Will law ever destroy license and the agents of sin become the ambassadors of righteousness? Only when Jesus Christ lives triumphantly in the lives of all people, will the kingdom of God fully come.

How impossible seems such a dream! The forces against are so great. But—

> Stronger than the dark the light:
> Stronger than the wrong the right.

The vision of Jesus will become real in human civilization. I shall see it some day, from the hills of home.

THE OLD LOST IN THE NEW

The prophet Jeremiah is picturing the destruction that will come upon his people because they turn away from God's law. He says: "I will take from thee the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle." The sound of the millstones by the door of each habitation was as familiar to them as the sound of the streetcars to us of the city. It was one of the home sounds of childhood, like the voice of the mill to me. Israel's sins were becoming Israel's destruction. The sound of the millstones should cease.

The sound of the millstones has ceased for many today, not because of sin but because of progress. The old is lost in the new. Yet he whose ears are not dulled can hear the old song in the new. Shelley hears the voice of the wind on the mountainside when the bow sweeps the strings of the violin made from that mountain-grown tree. The mountain wind was prophetic of Ole Bull's mastery of sound. Blessed are those who can see the permanent in the passing, hear the lasting in the temporal, find heaven on earth and walk the shining road up to God and eternal life. "Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure."

Once men interpreted God through the earthquake, *now* through the still small voice; once through sorrow, *now* through its molding power; once through hope, *now* in the reality of faith which declares: "After my physical hath been destroyed, yet shall I have flesh to see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold but not as a stranger."

Singing the Lord's Song

By Abraham J. Feldman

But they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31.

APPROXIMATELY 2500 years ago our ancestors who dwelt in Judea were conquered by the mighty armies of the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar. Their temple in Jerusalem was despoiled, burned and razed to the ground. Their leaders were slaughtered. Their homes were sacked. Their property was confiscated or destroyed. The walls of Jerusalem were demolished. And a large group of the noblest and best of the Judeans were deported as captives to Babylon.

A crushed and humbled lot they were who followed in the van of the conqueror. For it was not only the material losses that caused pain and grief. It was not alone their national pride that was humbled and the fear that their national existence was now ended. Perhaps more poignant than all was the suspicion that they were now forsaken by their God, that he punished them and that the covenant between them and him was no more.

> By the rivers of Babylon,
> There we sat down, yea, we wept,
> When we remembered Zion.
> Upon the willows in the midst thereof
> We hanged up our harps.
> For there they that led us captive asked of us words of song,
> And our tormentors asked of us mirth:
> Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

But the captives refused to sing. Keenly conscious of their loss, dejected and heart-broken, they asked: "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

Such was the first reaction to the misfortune that befell the Judean captives. But with time came healing and the "hope which springs eternal" in the human breast and especially in the heart of the Jew, brought a different mood, a changed mood. Hopelessness and the sense of utter frustration, in time, gave way to something else. And it was during this same captivity that the unknown seer whose words are preserved for us in the latter part of the book of Isaiah, sounded forth his message of comfort and of hope and gave them the solemn reassurance that "they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

Once again was the Lord's song heard from their lips, as they, in spite of all, hoped for relief, for redemption and restoration.

THE HOPE OF RESTORATION

What might have happened to those exiles had they really and permanently surrendered to their despair, had they banished all hope completely, had their harps been discarded and left forever upon those poplars by the streams of Babylon, nevermore to sound forth the song of the Lord? The answer is not hard to surmise. There never would have been a restoration, and the story of Israel might have ended there and then, with incalculable loss to the culture and morality and idealism and religion of the world.

My friends, I take this incident in our people's history for the theme of my sermon this morning because of the message and the lesson we may derive from it. We need this lesson, and the message had better be taken to heart. If ever there was a time when these were needed, that time is now, and if ever a people or individuals could profit from the ancient situation, we are that people, we are those individuals.

UNHAPPY TODAY!

That we live at a time when there is abundant cause for dejection none but a fool would deny. One cannot, one ought not to shut his eyes to the existence of difficulties greater than people have had to face for many a year. One cannot be oblivious to the tragedies one beholds in our life. Conditions admittedly are trying and difficult and however optimistic one is inclined to be, optimism does not preclude our seeing things as they are.

The lot of the Jew in many parts of the world has not been a happy one. Discrimination, torture, abuse, humiliation, anxiety, dread! In our own country discriminations against Jews in employment and against Jewish students seeking admission into colleges and universities, and more particularly into some professional schools, have been a steady source of annoyance and irritation. Internally, we still have our sore spots. They are Jewish cultural indifference, irreverence in regard to matters spiritual and lack of communal and social homogeneity and unity.

Under these circumstances it is hard to sing the song of Zion and of the Lord. Many find it very trying to be joyously Jewish. It almost seems that Heine was right when he said with characteristically sardonic cynicism: *Das Judentum ist gar keine Religion, es ist ein Unglueck*—"Judaism is not a religion but a misfortune."

> The whole head is sick,
> And the whole heart faint;
> From the sole of the foot even unto the head
> There are wounds, and bruises, and festering sores.
> Except the Lord of hosts
> Had left unto us a very small remnant,
> We should have been as Sodom,
> We should have been like unto Gomorrah.

THE BREAKDOWN OF FAITH

We have faced and are facing conditions (in common with our fellow citizens of all faiths) that do not make for ease or for a sense of security. We are, as we all know, in the midst of that economic disturbance which has threatened the spirit of many and has taken the fight out of some. It is not alone the economic losses, the deprivations of comforts, the vanishing of the savings of a lifetime, the loss of funds accumulated for the education of children or the savings against declining years, the loss of homes and possessions. These are not the worst aspects of the situation. What is infinitely more tragic is that, like the exiles by the rivers of Babylon,

many have lost hope and confidence and faith, and these have been replaced by fear and pessimism which have spread like prairie fires in the midst of our American communities. There are people about who have surrendered themselves to this spirit of destruction and futility, people who do indeed sit by the watercourses and refuse to see even the possibility of restoration or the need for carrying on so that there be a remnant to be saved, a remnant to behold the restoration that is sure to come.

It is against these and against this defeatism that I raise my voice, against that poisonous pessimism which kills souls, against that depraving materialism which denies the worth-whileness of anything that is not material. I raise my protest against that near-sightedness which sees the present moment alone, and has no perspective as to the past and is lacking in vision as to the future. I feel that these defeatists are the enemies of society who are destructive of the prospects of our social rebuilding and restoration. They are of those who see not the past and ignore the future.

GLOOMY MOMENTS IN HISTORY

Listen to this:

"It is a gloomy moment in history. Not for many years—not in the lifetime of most men who read this paper—has there been so much grave and deep apprehension; never has the future seemed so incalculable as at this time. In our own country there is universal commercial prostration and panic, and thousands of our poorest fellow-citizens are turned out against the approaching winter without employment, and without the prospect of it.

"In France the political cauldron seethes and bubbles with uncertainty; Russia hangs as usual, like a cloud, dark and silent upon the horizon of Europe; while all the energies, resources and influences of the British empire are sorely tried, and are yet to be tried more sorely, in coping with the vast and deadly Indian insurrection, and with its disturbed relations in China.

"It is a solemn moment, and no man can feel an indifference (which, happily, no man pretends to feel) in the issue of events.

"Of our own troubles no man can see the end. They are, fortunately, as yet mainly commercial; and if we are only to lose money, and by painful poverty to be taught wisdom—the wisdom of honor, of faith, of sympathy and of charity—no man need seriously to despair. And yet the very haste to be rich, which is the occasion of this widespread calamity, has also tended to destroy the moral forces with which we are to resist and subdue the calamity."

This is taken from Harper's Weekly published on October 10, 1857, about 75 years ago! And out of the New York Times I clipped the following revealing excerpts:

SOME PROPHETS WHO ERRED

"At the close of the eighteenth century, William Pitt said: 'There is scarcely anything around us but ruin and despair.' "

"At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Wilberforce said: 'I dare not marry, the future is so dark and unsettled.' "

"In 1848, Lord Shaftesbury declared, 'Nothing can save the British empire from shipwreck.' "

"In 1849, Disraeli said: 'In industry, commerce and agriculture there is no hope.' "

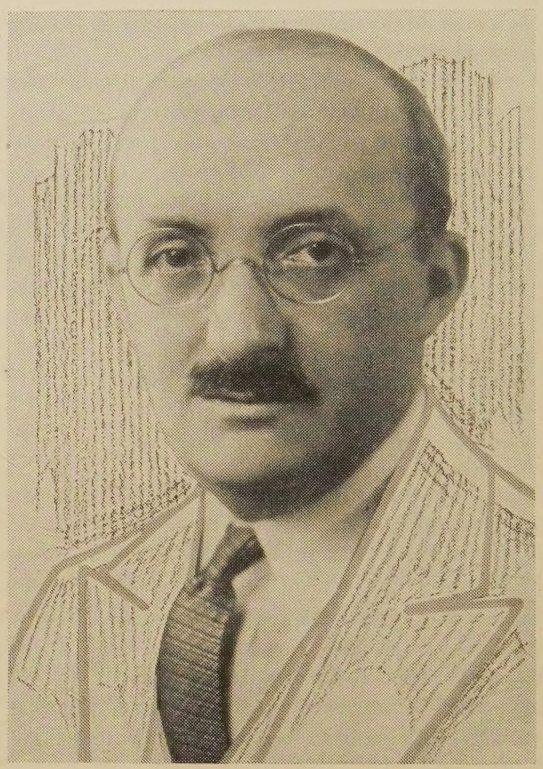
"In 1851, the Duke of Wellington, on the eve of death, thanked God he would 'be spared from seeing the consummation of ruin that is gathering about us.' "

"In 1919, Lord Grey said: 'Everything is tending to convulsion.' "

"In 1921 Bertrand Russell declared: 'In ten years Europe is sure to be a piffling, unregarded continent.' "

Each of these was thinking in the moment and of the moment only and demonstrated the truth long ago given by Shakespeare that "fears do make us traitors."

Each of these was proved wrong. Each of these mis-



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judged the capacity of men and nations to rise above trial and disaster. Each of these took no cognizance of man's "unconquerable soul." Each of these would have said that under the circumstances as they knew them "hopes were dupes," unmindful of the fact that "fears may be liars" and often are!

And so, too, as to Jewish life. There are many who despair. Many who ask "To what avail?" Many who say, in utter discouragement:

> —the struggle nought availeth,
> The labor and the wounds are vain,
> The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
> And as things have been they remain.

But, really, *od lo ovdoh tikvosenu*—"our hope is not yet lost," and only with the last of the Jews is the end of Jewish hopefulness to come. The hopefulness of the Jew is one of the most striking characteristics of our people and that we shall not surrender. We have known

trials before and we weathered them. We have known tribulations before and we rose above them. We have encountered adversity again and again and we grew stronger through the repeated onslaughts. Always "the unconquerable soul" of the Jew was in evidence, a soul inspired and sustained by the Lord's song chanted by the Jew in strange lands and in fiendish environments! The Lord's song has ever been a source of strength to us, and our people continuously did "sing their sorrows in a psalm of praise." And if today the Jew continues to live, it is by the strength which came to him and the comfort acquired through that song of the Lord which was heard through every age and generation in the experience of our people.

THE SONG OF CONFIDENCE

Again, in the words of Bialik:

If God had spared you of the holy spirit,
Nor taken all His soothing from your heart,
And rays of hope for better days than these
At times illumine all its leagues of darkness,
Brother of distress, know this to be
A salvaged spark, small fugitive of flame,
Saved by a miracle from that great fire
Your sires kept ever ardent upon their altar.
Who knows but that the rivers of their tears
Have borne and brought us hither, and their prayers
Have loaned us of the Lord, and thro' their death
They bade a life be ours, life to world's end?

So, too, in our trials. We can rise and shall rise, Phoenix-like, from the ashes, only so long as the song of hope remains in our hearts and resounds from our lips, only so long as life remains meaningful to us!

Translated into modern phraseology, what is "the Lord's song"? Is it not the expression of an attitude of confidence? Is it not the melody found in the hearts of those who have faith in life and man no less than in God? Is it not the tuning forth of the chant in the hearts of those who dare to dream whilst others have nightmares, of those who behold visions of glorious days whilst others are affrighted by phantoms. To sing the Lord's song, nowadays, is to seek to lift life to levels of greatness and nobility. "Life is too short," said Disraeli, "for us not to try to make it great." To sing the Lord's song today means to attempt to rise in spirit above the encircling gloom; it is to realize that

. . . not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

SINGING IN ADVERSITY

It is all very well to sing the Lord's song amid comfort and security. But the genuineness of it, its heartiness, its sincerity is best proved if unlike the exiles by the rivers of Babylon, we can sing it in adversity, too.

I would not have my life be one of bliss,
Untouched by heart-ache, agony, despair—
A pale, anemic thing. My nightly prayer
Is that with each new day I shall not miss
High venturings, nor undeserve the hiss
Of envious human moles who never dare
To touch off rockets in their souls and flare
Above their deepening grooves. O grant me this:
That I shall scale Life's peaks, explore its glooms,
Know mountained ecstasies, deep-valleyed pains—
That when my last red sands by Time are sieved
And Fate has struck my sinews from her looms,
I shall have earned three words o'er my remains:
Beside "was born" and "died"—"Between he lived"!

And that life between, should not that, despite all vicissitudes, be lived to the tune of that song which comes of daring and soaring and aspiring?

Oh, I know that there are "practical" people who will tell me that "results" alone count, folk who deem men like Amos and Jeremiah failures. And yet, I hold it true, that "Life is not always what we have achieved—but what we have attempted!"

I yet maintain that a "beaten prophet is better than a sainted fool!" As Elizabeth Barrett Browning said:

It takes a soul
To move a body—it takes a high-souled man
To move the masses, even to a cleaner stye;
It takes the ideal to blow an inch aside
The dust of the actual.

Idealists are found in all walks of life, in business and law and medicine, no less than in the ministry or in the teaching profession. And it is these idealists, in whatever sphere, who are and ever have been the singers of the Lord's songs even on foreign soil. Indeed, the true idealist knows no soil that may be labeled foreign to ideals, no endeavor that cannot be guided by them, no enterprise that should not be sanctified by them. It is these who know that life despite all difficulties—or because of them—is worth while, it is they who "learn to labor and to wait." They are the ones who outdare misfortune and outsmile calamity and face even death with a consciousness of duties yet to be performed and work yet to be done.

WORK NEVER FINISHED

George Eastman of Rochester, N. Y., ended his life and left a note to his friends saying: "My work is finished—why wait?" True, Eastman was approaching his eightieth birthday. True, he had been ill for some time. True, he was depressed by the long continued illness of one he loved greatly. True, his memory was no longer reliable. These may point to a weakening, to a breakdown in the understanding and character of one who like him had at all times lived greatly and usefully and nobly.

But, I ask, is any man's work ever finished? Is any man ever through? Always there are new tasks, new influences, new values, new adjustments, new duties awaiting all of us. Eastman no longer could sing the Lord's song—and the result was suicide. Hope gone, the vision dimmed and blurred—all beyond was darkness.

Compare that with the attitude of the elder Oliver Wendell Holmes:

At sixty-two life began;
At seventy-three begins once more;
At ninety-five shouldst thou arrive,
Still wait on God and work and thrive.

Or, compare it with Cecil Rhodes of South Africa who, after a phenomenally active life, though short (he was 47 at death), is reported to have said as he was dying: "So much to do. So little done." And contrast that with the teaching of our rabbis: "Thine is not the

bounden duty to complete the work. Neither art thou to refrain from doing it." You see, there is work to be done, there are tasks never-ending for all of us. And so long as there is the possibility and the opportunity to strive and do, we should not sit idly and dejectedly by the rivers of Babylon and mope and sigh and lament and refuse to sing the Lord's song of hope, of courage, of cheer. After all, what is the Lord's song for?

Build me a House,
Said God;
Not of cedar-wood or stone,
Where at some altar-place
Men for their sins atone.
To me, your only sin
Is to build my House too small;
Let there be no dome
To shut out the sky,
Let there be no cumbering wall.
Build me a House, a Home,
In the hearts of hungering men—
Hungering for the bread of hope,
Thirsting for faith, yearning for love,
In a world of grief and pain.
Build me a House!

Build me a World,
Said God;
Not with a navy's strife,
Nor with a host in arms,
Compassing death, not life.
Build me a World, said God,
Out of man's fairest dreams;
Heaven must be its dome,
Lighted by prophet-gleams;
Justice shall be the stones
On which my world shall rise:
Truth and Love its arches,
Gripping my ageless skies.
Out of dreams, on the earthy sod,
Build me a World,
Said God.

Such a world, as thus pictured by Thomas Curtis Clark, we must have for happiness and security. But, remember, the builders of such a world must have vision, must have ideals, must have courage and hope and must be ready to sing the song of the Lord even though they sit for the moment by the rivers of Babylon!

Memories

SOMETIMES, when the grind of the city beats on my heart
Like a brazen hammer with terrible blows,
I think of a lost garden I knew in my boyhood,
Filled with the scent of the rose.

And sometimes, when the clamor of life seems endless,
And my soul is bowed with its weight of pain,
I think of an old, still apple tree in blossom
At the end of a hawthorn lane.

Oh, do not smile at such memories!
They keep us young, they keep the man-heart right.
And sometime we will all go back contented,
To a Garden and a Tree in a place of light.

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.

The Vision of God

By John Howard Melish

And when they were come and had gathered the church together they rehearsed what great things the Lord had done for them. Acts 14:27.

PAUL and Barnabas had been sent by the Christians of Antioch into Asia Minor, there to tell the people about the new religion. From that errand they had now returned to Antioch. "And when they were come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed what great things the Lord had done for them."

When you turn to the chapter of Acts which describes that first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas you marvel that they had any great things to tell. For that chapter contains only little things, disagreeable experiences, incidents of persecution, bigotry, superstition and race prejudice. At Iconium Paul and Barnabas were stoned out of town; at Lystra the crowd treated them as gods come down from heaven, calling Barnabas Jupiter and Paul Mercurius, and then mobbed them and left Paul as one dead. And yet, notwithstanding such treatment at the hands of men, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and told the Christians what great things the Lord had done for them.

We who gather here today* return to this sacred place from the various Asia Minors where we labor. This school sent us forth as Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas. None of us has been mobbed, or stoned out of town. Do I say this to our shame? We may even have incurred the greater danger of having all men speak well of us. But whether one or the other has been our portion that is not what the apostles rehearsed to the church at Antioch; nor shall we. Speaking for myself, and I trust also for you my brothers in the ministry and fellow alumni of this school, I want to rehearse what great things the Lord hath done for us.

I

The Asia Minor to which Paul and Barnabas were sent was the most cultured portion of the Mediterranean world. Some of the choicest exhibits of Hellenistic art now in our museums, such as the Laocoon, the Dying Gaul, or the Altar of Pergamum came from the Greek cities of Asia; there also schools of philosophy had their origin; and there literature and science were nourished and reached classical maturity. Which is the harder task, to present the Christian religion to men at a low level of culture, or to men at the opposite end of the educational scale? In Asia Minor was the cultured mind, the mind which asked searching questions and required of any religion that it should not be in conflict with the best knowledge the generation possessed.

What Paul experienced later in Athens he must have met also in the enlightened cities of Asia. "Certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say?" And what he said then he must have said many

*This sermon was preached before the alumni of the Episcopal seminary in Cambridge, Mass., where Dr. Melish received his theological training.

times before: that God made the world and all things therein; that men are the offspring of God, living, moving, having their being in him; and that they who seek the Lord, find him, though he is not far from every one. He must also have said some of the things which he later wrote in his letters to those Greek cities: that the mind of God had been manifested in Christ and that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. And what Paul and Barnabas rehearsed to the church in Antioch was what the Lord had done in touching the lips and hearts of men with such live coals from off his altar. God had given to Paul and Barnabas a vision of himself and they had not been disobedient unto it.

From then until now Christianity has been primarily the proclamation of the vision of God. The Bampton lectures for 1928 had this as its theme. "Christianity," wrote Dr. Kirk, "has come into the world with a double purpose, to offer men the vision of God and to call them to the pursuit of that vision." "The simple words of the sixth beatitude have in their day called men into the desert, have drawn them into the cloister, have made of them saints and solitaries, martyrs and missionaries. They have bred errors and schisms past man's power to number; they have beckoned to the forbidden labyrinths of magic and astrology; they have led a pope himself to the verge of formal heresy; they have been tied with the bands of orthodoxy only to break their chains and witness again to the freedom of the gospel. They have torn men from the study of philosophy and the love of family and friends. Again they have sent them to school with Aristotle and Plato, and have taught them to look for God in the sanctities of the Christian home. Under their influence some have learned to hate the beauties of nature and of life, whilst others have been inspired to embrace those beauties perhaps too rashly." "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." In that one phrase is the acorn out of which grew the oak of Christian thought and conduct.

"TELL US WHAT YOU HAVE FOUND"

At a round table conference held in India some years ago a missionary spoke at some length on the facts of the gospel. He was finally interrupted by a Hindu judge, who quietly remarked: "We are fairly familiar with the events you are narrating, you tell us what you have found."

That is the great question before us, what have we found for ourselves? A familiarity with the Christian past enables one to classify religious phenomena of our day; we can say that Buchmanism is a reappearance of Methodism and its emphasis is on the emotional life to the exclusion of the intellectual; that the Oxford movement was merely the offshoot of romanticism; that Barthianism is twentieth century Calvinism, and naturalism is only a reassertion of the renaissance. And there is value in all this, for the experience of other generations may be a helpful guide. No generation starts from scratch; life is rather like a relay team and what has gone before makes the task of the present easier or harder. After all, religion is largely a matter of emphasis. We of today are not interested in the codification of moral precepts, or the exercise of corporate discipline, or the organization of asceticism in the monastic movement. Such matters, however important in past generations, find fewer sponsors and adherents at the present day than at any other epoch. We can declare only that which we ourselves have heard and seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled of the word of life.

II

The Asia Minor to which we are sent is the America of today. If I am not mistaken the religious mood of today is humanism. Humanism is to the thinking of America what the logos doctrine was to the thinking of Asia Minor in the days of Paul and the Fourth Gospel. And as the author of the Fourth Gospel, and to a less degree the apostle to the gentiles, made use of the logos idea to interpret and expand the religion of Christ, so we of today must use humanism. When I made that remark to a clerical friend the other day his answer was: "Humanism is just old-fashioned Unitarianism steamed and pressed to make it look new, about as intoxicating as 3-2 beer." So he classified it and dismissed it—and, so it seems to me, missed it.

It is the mood that counts, not the theory. The fundamental idea of humanism is simple. In the words of Bremond, "It is an accepted axiom that a man feels little interest in that which he holds contemptible. The humanist does not consider humanity contemptible. He wholeheartedly takes the part of human nature; even when he sees it miserable and impotent, he excuses and defends it and raises it." Such is the idea of humanism. But when you have thus described it have you caught the mood? Are you not like the chemist in Balzac's story who looking at his beautiful wife weeping before him, exclaimed: "Tears, tears. I have analyzed them in my laboratory; they are composed of slightly saline water having an alkaline reaction."

There is in Russia, Turkey and elsewhere today an aggressive movement known as the Society of the Godless. The cartoons which travelers bring from the Soviets tell the story more clearly than many words. In every picture age is pitted against youth. Youth with the tractor looks with expectant gaze to the school; age, carrying on its back the priest representing religion and the kulak, landlordism, looks to the church. No one in Russia can be a leader of the people and at the same time religious; one of the conditions of membership in the communist party is that one shall oppose God equally with the landlord and the priest.

PIONEERING IN RELIGION

And this stand taken against Christianity and Judaism in Russia is matched by the stand of the young Turks against Mohammedanism in Turkey. And yet the communists and young Turks are the pioneers of the new day who have overthrown corrupt and despotic tsarism and all its works and have introduced into the realm of the sick man of Europe health and healing of body and mind. This is not a theory but a condition. Nothing human except religion is alien to it. To be a man, it says, is not that enough? To be a man is to be a thing of splendor.

Professor Nash was wont to say that the mood of any period is more important than its thought. Whatever

we may think about the theory of one kind of humanism or the other, shall we not catch the mood within and behind them both? So far as words can convey a mood I find it expressed in this exclamation: "We now behold with greater and greater clearness one who made all gods and shall unmake them. From the dim dawn of history and from the inmost depths of every soul the face of our father man looks out upon us with the fire of eternal youth in his eyes and exclaims, 'Before Jehovah was I am.' "

III

Such a mood as this challenges the religion of the churches. If, as Dr. Kirk maintains, Christianity historically has been the pursuit of the vision of God, a religion without God reverses the trend of the centuries, and starts a new pursuit of values. What has God done for us that we may call the church together and rehearse our experience in his service?

There is also a humanism in our generation which, unlike the anti-religious type, definitely calls itself religious. Recently it issued a manifesto which was signed by some thirty-four educators, ministers, editors. It called for the establishment of a religion shaped for the needs of this age; it declared that the religious forms and ideas of our fathers are no longer adequate; it asserts that the time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious thought throughout the modern world; and it maintains that religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience. The importance of the document is that some thirty men have come to general agreement on matters of final concern and that those men are undoubtedly representative of a large number who are moulding a modern attitude out of the materials of the present world.

Is there any answer which we of this school, more particularly perhaps than any school in our church at least, can give? I would suggest two.

When the humanist manifesto declares that the religious forms and ideas of our fathers are no longer adequate, it states what we all know to be true. Most of our hymnal, practically all of the Book of Common Prayer, and of course the entire Bible antedated what we call modern knowledge. Modern knowledge has given the world a new time perspective, a new space perspective, a new world perspective, a new psychology, and biblical and historical criticism. These have become commonplaces even among high school students. And yet what have we done to bring the utterances and expressions of our religious thought and feeling into harmony with this new knowledge? A group of men came to a friend of mine in another church and said: "In your sermons you give us what we believe and then you ask us to recite the Apostles' Creed. The two things clash." The sermon may be modern but the service is medieval. There is little wonder that people only tolerate the service, or delay their entering the church until it is nearly over, or stay away from it altogether. What ministers ever go to a church not their own for a service? They time their going to escape it. The religious forms no longer express the religious feelings; the religious ideas of our fathers no longer clarify the thinking of their children.

One of the noblest books I have read is the "Prayers for the Social Awakening" by the late Walter Rauschenbusch. When I have used those prayers in a public service I have found an immediate quickening of the spiritual pulse of the congregation. They are winged words; they are listened to by the common people; they speak as having authority.

"OUR INCOMPARABLE LITURGY"

In the Episcopal church we have had what we call our incomparable liturgy, and such indeed it is, judged by its origin and its literary beauty. But we can no more remain satisfied with this inheritance than Paul was satisfied with the worship of the synagogue in which he had been brought up, or the author of the Fourth Gospel was satisfied with the theology of the second coming of Jesus on the clouds of heaven in which he had been educated as a boy. As Paul threw off the forms of Judaism, as the Fourth Gospel threw off the ideas of the early Christians, and created new forms and formulated new ideas, in the light of the new knowledge of their day, and their own richer experience of Christ, so must we.

> Give us a virile Christ for these rough days;
> You painters, sculptors, show the warrior bold;
> And you who turn mere words to gleaming gold.

Many of the forms and ideas which were gold once, no longer gleam; many of them are now but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

We of the modernist group within the historic church have doubtless been trying to do just that, each in his own way. The time has come, it seems to me, when we should do it together and more energetically. The group in our own church which would go backward works together; the group that now stands pat stands together; only the forward looking group hesitates and remains aloof from one another. We made one rather feeble attempt when the last revision of the Book of Common Prayer was first introduced but accomplished little and then adjourned *sine die*.

When I look back to the dreams of undergraduate days and try to estimate the accomplishment of my ministry those hopes and dreams seem almost ironical, so little has been accomplished for liturgical reform in our own church. If we were attempting in our day what the author of the Fourth Gospel did in his, or Paul in his, to give utterance to religious aspiration and experience the humanist charge against us would not be so true. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with the new knowledge and the fresh riches of recent experience. The church cannot afford to have men religious in their very opposition to religion.

VIEWS OF THE BIBLE

The view of the Bible, the view of the universe, the view of mankind, upon which the creeds and the liturgy are based, have all changed. Let the historic documents stand; but let us frame modern alternatives which can

be used in the Christian church for purposes of instruction, guidance and profession. "The Church Catechism Revised" authorized in the diocese of Birmingham is an illustration of what may be done. We have won the right to reinterpret the old formulas in the light of modern knowledge. The next step is to win the right to omit, or to substitute for them. The underlying idea running through the orthodox creed is substantially sound; the spirit is living, but the letter is dead. Let the dead bury their dead. We now have in our church some men and women, and they are among the most earnest, sincere and intelligent, who will not recite be-

JOHN HOWARD MELISH

lief in the virgin birth, the resurrection of the body, the ascension of Christ, or his coming again at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead. Yet they are loyal Christians; they strive to be practicing Christians. We want more such Christians.

PRAYER BOOK REVISION

When prayer book revision came before the general convention of our church the present bishop of New York, then a clerical deputy, moved that there should be no change in doctrine and that resolution prevailed with scarcely a dissenting vote. And yet a change in doctrine is what the church authorities must make if the abler young men are to be drawn into our ministry; if the intellectually keen young laymen and women are to be retained in our membership. At present the church is looking backward for guidance to the decisions of the past. The past is no infallible guide for the present, nor is the present an infallible guide for the future. There is but one guide, even the spirit of truth which will lead the followers of Jesus into all truth. That spirit, if followed, will create new expressions of the things which are most surely believed among us.

Let me be more specific. In the Birmingham Catechism Revised the creed is described as the statement of the Christian faith made by the church and known as the Apostles' Creed. Then it is printed as we now have it. This is followed by a statement of the faith in the words of holy scripture which is a great improvement over the Apostles' Creed. Then is asked the question: What do you chiefly learn by these statements of the Christian faith? And this is the answer: "I learn to believe in God, who has made himself known to us: First—through his age-long work of creation, wherein he formed us for the knowledge of himself, wherefore we call him Father; second, through the life of Jesus Christ our Savior, who unveiled to men the character and will of God; third, through the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver, who sanctifies us, in his freedom, truth and love, and leads us into the family of the church, called to be One, Holy, Catholic, Christian fellowship in earth and heaven."

HUMANISM WITHOUT PRAYER

Such changes as these, of course, will not satisfy the humanists. Nothing short of bowing God out of his universe will do that. They also bow us modernists out of consideration. But I am not concerned with these professional humanists so much as with the increasing number of earnest men and women who never heard of humanism but who feel that what they find in our churches leaves them cold. Humanism also leaves them cold, as President Morgan of Antioch college frankly admits of his students. Let us be equally frank in acknowledging that our formulas do not stir the soul. Unless we can do something to bring coals of fire from off God's altar indifferentism will go on increasing and the forces of secularism and agnosticism will triumph.

At bottom religious humanism without prayer aims to accomplish what the old Scot asked when he prayed: "God, give men a great respect for myself." The humanist would recognize humanity as the supreme spiritual fact of the universe. That is true for us also. In and through this world and all its interests and activities the life eternal is to be found. The humanists are right in their protest against the idea that man has no part in working out his own salvation. "What is specifically called by Christians the Incarnation," says the Lady Margaret professor of divinity at Cambridge, "is only a visible, outstanding example or illustration of the whole process, which has God as its ground and God within it, sustaining and shaping and guiding." Is there a higher idea of humanity than that found in our Ascension day hymn, where with poetic license the author says:

> Thou hast raised our *human nature*
> On the clouds to God's right hand;
> There *we* sit in heavenly places,
> There with thee in glory stand.
> Jesus reigns, adored by angels.
> *Man* with God is on the throne.
> Mighty God, in thine ascension
> *We* by faith behold our *own.*

There is another type of humanism in our day which is definitely and aggressively anti-religious. It is found

not in the field of thought but in that of action. The leaders in this revolt against religion are the chief benefactors of man: they are the reformers of great abuses, the pioneers of a better social order, the saviors of the people. If the apostle Paul, if the author of the Fourth Gospel were to come into our Asia Minor today what would they say about this strange mood which hates God because it loves man? We know what the elder wrote about the man who says he loved God and hated his brother. What would he say about the man who loved what he could see and hated what he could not see?

ANTI-RELIGIOUS HUMANISM

One thing is easy to say but it is difficult to practice. We of the modernist church claim the whole life of man for religion. There is no distinction between the sacred and the secular. If therefore there is any movement anywhere which actually promotes the good of man we see in that movement religion. As our Master said to those on his right hand when they asked, "When saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or in prison and ministered unto thee," we say, inasmuch as these communists, these atheists do such deeds unto the brethren of Christ they do it unto him. The atheist communists are Christians unawares. Like Paul to the Athenians, we say, Him whom you ignorantly dislike declare we unto you. We offer no apology for their violence; we cannot justify the means by the end; but nevertheless in so far as they make a better world we claim them for religion.

Socially minded religion is gradually attaining an objective which is acceptable to Christian and Jew, Protestant and Catholic alike. In the field of thought and in the field of action it is beginning to see clearly and to act constructively. In the one field it has to do with economic justice, the distribution of wealth and the moral adequacy of the capitalistic system. It also recognizes that thought must be focused on concrete problems if it is to be effective in improving the economic and social order, and therefore it advocates in no uncertain terms: a definite program of public works, a shorter work day and week without reduction in wages, insurance against unemployment, and a system of cooperative economic planning applied not only to industry as a whole in this country, but to world economic relations, including the waste of armaments. Here is at best a minimum definite economic problem with a national official religious backing approaching unanimity.

DANGERS OF HUMANISM

But I am not primarily concerned with these two things as such but with the question as to what God has to do with the movement of which they are one expression. "By identifying the new learning with heresy," said Erasmus, "you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance." We are in danger of identifying the human values with radicalism and thereby making the divine values synonymous with the status quo. The religious humanists share this danger with us. In his "Prospects of Humanism," Lawrence Hyde makes this remark: "So far at least as the English speaking population of the world are concerned the democratic ideal may be said to have been substantially realized." But for us it is not the democratic ideal but one far more comprehensive and radical; it is the ideal of the kingdom of God. And that means something more than giving women the right to vote, and making men free to trade, and both to worship God and educate their children as they think fit.

Not little, but much remains to be done. But my concern is not with these things but with God. I would not identify the kingdom of God with communism, nor even with humanitarianism. The Kingdom is the rule of God in the minds and wills of men. The Kingdom grows through the free surrender of the human spirit to the love which is both first cause and final goal of all life. It is no individual affair, transacted between the soul and God. Grace is mediated through fellowship with other persons and comes to the individual always as a member of a society. It issues in a new social relationship of communion with those who are children of God, in which the latent spiritual forces of all are called forth and exercised.

THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

Neither would we identify the church with the Kingdom. The church is the instrument of the Kingdom. Its history is chequered with disastrous failures, and wonderful victories, with opportunities taken and missed. Even now the course of events makes it possible to repair some of the errors of the past, to advance toward the unity of the spirit, and the bond of peace, and to achieve a more united witness to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which the world, distracted by partial philosophies and unsatisfying ideals, is deeply in need.

The Spirit of God works within and beyond the bounds of the visible church. It works through peaceful advance and through pain and tumult. It is comparatively easy to see the one; can we see the other? In the slow triumph of truth over error we see it; can we see it in the growing desire for true brotherhood, between men of every class and nation? We see it in the development of a fuller life for individuals; can we see it in healthier surroundings and better conditions? "May we who now live," prays Rauschenbusch, "see the oncoming of the great day of God, when all men shall stand side by side in equal worth and real freedom, all toiling and all reaping, masters of nature but brothers of men, exultant in the tide of the common life, and jubilant in the adoration of thee, the source of blessings and the Father of all." If we believe that God is alive, that his spirit is at work in the lives of men today as in Paul and John in Asia Minor this is what he has to say to us. Why should we not think that as his spirit worked then he works now; that as he brought Greek philosophy, art, and science into the service of Christ then, so he brings economics and science into his service today? Why should we oppose this because we cannot prove from the Bible that such is the case?

Who of us believes that the Bible contains all truth necessary to salvation? Salvation is social, economic, scientific no less than personal. Of course the Bible does not contain these things; of course the early church never dreamt of these things. They come to us today in fulfilment of the promise, "greater things than these shall ye see because I go unto my Father. My Father is greater than I." These are the things we think we have

learned under the guidance of the Spirit. We see these economic and industrial facts not apart from God but in God. We see the world turn against God because its representatives here have no use for these things. What we would do if compelled to choose there is no doubt. We too would go the way of the anti-religious because the world is in dire need.

God, we believe, is speaking to some men today as he spoke to the prophets and the apostles. No one of us dare claim it for himself, but for the movement of which we are a part we do claim it. In humility, with a sense of unfitness, with a consciousness of our ignorance we still believe in God, the living God! "And they gathered together the church and rehearsed the things which the Lord had done for them."

OUR TREMENDOUS TODAY

So we return from the Asia Minor of our day—a strange marvelous day—a day that has seen the worst war of all history; a day that still witnesses the worst of all depressions; a day that has seen the greatest of discoveries, and the promise of greater still—a day when man "stands forth pale, resolute, prepared to die, which means alive at last." And here we are in this old place from which we went forth. New problems, searching questions, going to the root of all moral and spiritual life, press for answer and solution. We cannot forget the congenital intertwining of theism and humanism in the religion of the prophets, and in the religion of Jesus. To the question: Are we able to hold fast to both theism and humanism now, or must we choose between them? we answer: We are able—thank God!

Thirty-five years ago my class sat here on commencement day, and heard Philo Sprague speak. Only one of his words lingers in my memory. "Young men," said he, "if I were to examine you for holy orders I would ask only one question—'Do you really believe in God?' For myself—I trust for others here today—I have tried to answer out of the things which life has taught. "Lord we believe, help thou our unbelief." "And when they had called the church together they rehearsed the great things which the Lord had done for them."

The Miser

I HAVE wasted nothing. O Lord, I have saved,
Saved, put by in a goodly hoard.
What of the prodigals? Judge them, Lord—
Their wanton waste of Thy mercies poured
Into the sewers! Profligates!
Judge them, Lord, in Thy righteous wrath.
I have saved, O Lord, I have scraped and saved,
With my eyes downbent to my daily path;
I have counted and carried, checked and stored,
Nothing too worthless, nothing too small,
Never a fragment thrown away—
A gainful use I have found for all.

But what is my store? Do they call this Death,
This poignant insight? At last I see.
I have wasted nothing, O Lord, but life,
Time, and the talent Thou gavest me.

LAURA BELL EVERETT.

The Wreckers

BY J. W. G. WARD

Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set. Proverbs 22:28.

IN the good old days, which the unthinking sometimes ecstatically eulogize, a quaint and profitable craft was carried on in Europe. The coasts were ill-lighted at best, and so for the guidance of mariners making for port beacons were kindled at various points. Following the guiding gleam which flashed athwart the dark waters, a vessel would pursue its way. Unhappily that way sometimes ended in disaster. The beacon became not a blessing but a curse. At lonely points on the rock-bound shore false signals were burned to lure the mariner to destruction. Then as the ship crashed on some craggy shelf, and hung helpless like a wounded animal in the clutches of captors, these vile monsters in human form set about disabling the crew and removing the cargo. These were the wreckers.

We are sufficiently familiar with the ways of the sea to note the value of the landmarks by which, in the daytime, the sailor steered and the lights by which at night his course was set, when he drew near to port. It is interesting, however, to note that among the Hebrews the landmark was one of the most jealously guarded institutions of the nation when it settled in the promised land. Let us say quite frankly that it was to them a somewhat different thing. A man's possessions were marked by placing a boulder on the boundaries of his ground, and it was therefore a comparatively easy matter for one to remove one of these stones, and develop his own possessions by diminishing those of his neighbor. That is the meaning of the term in its narrowest sense. But there were other landmarks, and by the time of Solomon the phrase had become one in which there was moral significance. "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set" carried the implication that anything which made for the common good must be jealously safeguarded by the community, and departure from rectitude was the equivalent of removing a landmark.

I

The landmark was essential to the well-being of the people.

It not only marked out the extent of a man's property, but anything that served in the nature of a landmark was invaluable. It gave direction. Imagine a caravan with its long train of lumbering camels journeying through unfamiliar country. On either side, as far as eye could reach, there was only a trackless waste of sand, except that on the horizon could be seen the gaunt form of a boulder or a cairn of unhewn stones. Were it not for some such mark, the chances were that the traveler would fall in his tracks, perishing for lack of water amid the inhospitable sands. When evening fell, even the moon would be veiled with a haze caused by the desert so that it would shed only a dim light upon his way. The peculiar effect of those wastes is to create a sense of loneliness and foreboding that is unaccountable, and only resolute resistance on the part of the

traveler enables him to fight against this influence of the silent sands. To know, however, that he is on the right track, and that as he passes those silent sentinels of stone that may still be seen in the Plains of Moab, or picks out some familiar features of the landscape he will in due course arrive at his destination, gives steadying confidence.

LIGHTHOUSES OF LIFE

All this is more readily comprehended by us when we think of the landmarks around our rugged coasts. By day, that lighthouse which stands in solemn isolation upon yonder jutting point is like an angel in radiant garments, warning the mariner of dangers that lurk beneath the alluring waters. It enables him, too, to shape his course and reach the harbor. But at night when the sun has set, and the dark vault above is relieved only by the precarious light of a few stars that glimmer through the slowly drifting clouds, lights kindled by thoughtful hands flash out their warning message across the surging sea. Were it not for them, and the lightships that lie moored so many miles out, the vessel would run grave risks. As the poet Longfellow eloquently puts it:

> Build me straight, O worthy Master,
> Staunch and strong a goodly vessel
> That shall laugh at all disaster,
> And with wave and whirlwind wrestle.

That were but an idle boast were it not for these lights which are veritable landmarks. The fateful Goodwins have lured many a proud ship to disaster, but many another would have fallen victim to their wiles had it not been for the constancy of the warning beam. The Nantucket lightship marks similar treacherous shoals, but there are others which are landmarks in the strictest sense. The sailor who enters the English channel picks up the wide flashing beam of the Eddystone light which sends its beneficent blaze through the murk of midnight. As one enters the St. Lawrence, one can see the beacon blaze of Father Point, Metis, and Rimouski, and by these the ship gains direction and we know that within a few hours we shall set foot on shore again. So, whether he be a traveler by land or sea, the landmark is essential. But if he be a traveler from time to eternity, the landmark is of even more vital importance.

II

The landmark was removed only for some nefarious purpose.

It was rapacity that made a man remove the landmark of his neighbor. It was the same vile thing that caused the wreckers to kindle their false fires and lure a proud ship to its doom. The ancient landmarks set up by the fathers of a bygone day to mark the heritage of their children, or to guide the wanderer on his way, are overturned. It is not long before they are buried beneath the sands of neglect or unbelief, and when the landmark is gone, one of the safeguards of moral welfare has been removed. We understand now not only why the writer of Proverbs enjoins men not to remove such a memorial of the past, but also why, in an earlier day, a curse was attached to such nefarious conduct. If landmarks that point men to purity, unselfishness, and that faith which overcomes the world are removed, then time's traveler is left desolate indeed, without a guide to give him direction or to enable him to reach his destination.

No sensible man would stifle discussion about the substance of faith. Milton relates that when he was in Naples he went with a friend on a visit to Vesuvius. He was surprised to see how cheerfully the peasants dwelt on the sides of a volcano, but his friend reassured him by saying that when the lava descended they simply retreated before it without fear. They knew how fast it would go and how far, and though it might do some

J. W. G. Ward

damage it would soon render the soil more fruitful, and the vineyards would yield richer fruit. But when the flames were pent up in the mountain, the fear seized upon them. Then the earth shook and cities were swallowed up. "So," says Milton, "it is in politics where the people are most closely restrained, there it gives the greatest shocks to peace and order; therefore would I say to all kings, 'Let your demagogues lead crowds lest they lead armies; let them bluster, lest they massacre; a little turbulence is as it were the rainbow of the state; it shows, indeed, that there is a passing shower; but it is a pledge that there shall be no deluge.' " So it is with faith. We have no objection to a distinguished professor addressing the Royal Society on any theme upon which he is competent to speak, but when such a one declares vehemently that there is no soul, we not only venture to contradict him, but to question his capacity. A man may be a brilliant scientist, but that does not constitute him an authority upon religion.

To avoid any chance of misunderstanding, let us

affirm that we welcome intelligent discussion of the facts of faith. What is more, we must keep an open mind to avail ourselves of all that progress in science can afford the thinking man. There have been discoveries which have made some of the old theories no longer tenable. We no longer believe, for example, that the sun moves around the earth. Yet it must be conceded that although the earlier view has been superseded, the light and warmth of the sun remain. So, granting that there may be an enlargement of our knowledge in this direction or that, that this statement must be modified or otherwise changed, that this other fact is capable of an entirely different interpretation, these matters do not affect the validity of the Christian faith. Obscurantism is to be condemned. But so is that wild abandonment of the verified facts of faith which have served to keep the soul of man in the true direction. All we are concerned about, at the moment, is to make sure that no sweeping statements of the so-called "intelligentsia" that religion is merely so much outworn superstition are permitted, unquestioned, to take away the landmarks of a living faith in Jesus Christ.

AMID THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE

Unless memory is playing us a sorry trick, the Apostle Paul said: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is a comparatively simple thing in superb remoteness from the fierce struggle of life to discuss such matters without feeling, but it is a matter of the gravest importance when a weak wanderer, making his way laboriously across the desert sands of time, looks in vain for a landmark which has been removed. Though we may describe such a landmark as an ancient one, there are some facts of spiritual experience which have not only served as a landmark to those who have gone before us, but which are essential to the progress of the race. They should stand immovable as the pyramids of Egypt.

They may be obscured for a time by the whirling sandstorm, or even by the dialectical dust of academic disputants. Or to revert to our figure, though false fires may be kindled by the wreckers, their very falsity but tends to prove the value of the true light. John declared that there was a "True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and can we suppose that those who followed its guiding beam were mistaken? Nay, the light that has guided men through nights of cruel persecution needs some other explanation. Before the ancient landmark is removed as something superseded by the onward march of knowledge, we must inquire more deeply into its origin and significance. The Christian experience of the saints, the martyrs, the fathers of our faith, was too real. By the light flung from those living torches—the men and women who were sewn in inflammable material and were set on fire to illuminate the imperial gardens of the infamous Nero—other souls have been guided on the way of life. By the fires of Smithfield and of Oxford, true beacons shining amid the darkness, others have sailed surely toward the heavenly haven. Recall the stirring words of old Bishop Latimer. When they brought a faggot already blazing and laid it at Ridley's feet, Latimer cried out: "Be of good comfort, Brother Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." And surely with such men in mind the soul-thrilling words of Lowell have significance:

> By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track.
> Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the Cross that turns not back.

The landmark was safeguarded by common concern for the common good.

When the moral sense was developed, it became a matter of honor with every true man to see that none interfered with the safety of the state, the good of the community, or the rights of the individual, by removing the ancient landmarks.

The strong must champion the cause of the weak.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Ernest Fremont Tittle

O THOU eternal Father of our spirits, in our great need we turn to Thee. We desire before Thee to unburden our hearts.

We long to be understood by someone who may, therefore, be able to help us and not only to condemn us.

We long for the healing touch of loving-kindness and for the comforting touch of affection.

We long for escape from the bondage of our sins.

We long for clean hands and a pure heart.

We long for something that will lift us out of ourselves, enable us to transcend our griefs and our disappointments, our pettiness and our self-concern.

We long to believe that our lives are significant, that our labor is not vain, and that our sufferings may prove to be redemptive.

We long for a better and more brotherly world in which all that is noblest and best in us shall have a fair chance to flower.

We long for a world in which our children shall be more favorably situated than we have been, less exposed to the perils of poverty and to the demoralization of great wealth.

We long for a world in which nation shall not lift up sword against nation or learn war any more, but human energy may be entirely devoted to the upliftment and enrichment of human life.

We long for a world in which the will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

O Lord, our God, grant unto us, we beseech Thee, the help which from Thee must come if we are ever to see of the travail of our souls and be satisfied.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

There was nothing to stay the hand of the landed proprietor who, like Ahab coveting Naboth's vineyard, sought to filch the property of the poor. Was there not? On the contrary, he had arrayed against him the growing moral sense of the whole community. The quarrel took on other proportions. It was not he against a defenceless person but against the whole clan.

III

The landmark demands the service of life.

As we traverse the wilderness toward the new and better country, we need something to guide our steps. As we sail the dark seas, under heavy clouds that blot out the kindly stars, we must have a warning beam to direct our course. God has given us glorious ideals of freedom and life that have been set up by those who have gone before us, and which, like Bartholdi's noble Statue of Liberty, not only stands with heavenward pointing hand, as the traveler approaches the harbor of New York in the daytime, but which at night throws the light of her torch across the waters.

Even more effective than the daring ideals men have cherished is the might of their example. The very fact that they died without receiving the promises does not make their witness any the less potent. They may not have achieved the hoped-for good, but their striving was not fruitless. The light of their loyalty and valor shines brightly through the centuries, and makes the soul of their successors strong.

Greater than all, however, is the Christ who is himself the Light of the world. He gave to men those very ideals, and he inspired the lofty example of those who so nobly lived and so splendidly died. Yet he is the source of all power as he is the pledge of ultimate success. His love never failed the people of his earthly day. It will not fail us.

> It is an ever-fixéd mark,
> That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
> It is the star to every wandering bark,
> Whose worth's unknown.

There are still those, as we have said, who would remove the ancient landmarks of religious faith, but without such safeguards the world is robbed of its surest guide.

There are those who seem uncaring whether they plunge the world into another war, as though we had not had enough of the ghastly tragedy, as though we had not seen enough of the earth turned into shambles, the fair fields of the peasantry drenched with blood, and the homes of the people, pitiful type of their hearts—broken, ruined, desolate. What has the church to say? What has the Christian to do? What is the plain duty of those who have tried to bring order out of chaos and to remove the stigma of shameful slaughter? We have tried conferences, policies, expedients. They are useless as a means to this great end. They are but as flickering fires that fail to send their light through the murk of the dark hour. In the name of the Highest, let us try the One we have not yet brought into our affairs: the gracious and glorious Christ. "In him was life, and the light was the light of man."

He is the world's landmark, the brightest beacon of the race.

The Remembrancer

By Joseph Fort Newton

The Holy Spirit shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. John 14:26.

NO gift of the Spirit, by whose inspiration we have understanding, is more profound than his ministry to the memory. Of course, this promise had a peculiar meaning to the little circle of men who heard it for the first time. They were to be the teachers of the whole world in the things pertaining to Jesus. They were to be his apostles and the preachers of his gospel. They were to produce his literature. As witnesses to Christ a primary necessity would be fidelity of recollection, and no aid could be of greater value than the gift of special remembrance. As Dean Alford said, it is on the fulfillment of this promise to the apostles that their sufficiency as witnesses of all the Lord did and taught is grounded. By virtue of this promise we read the gospels with confidence, and the record, so far above the powers of such men, confirms our faith.

Such a ministry of the Spirit was made necessary, as much by the nature of the truths taught as by the limits of the learners. Always the primary question in education is not, how much does the teacher know? but, how much does the pupil grasp? Much of the teaching of Jesus was above the heads of his disciples, and they misunderstood it. Simple of mind, slow of heart, their ideals were often of the earth, earthy. For example, if they had at first grasped the catholic nature of the gospel, as embracing all races and all ages, their prejudice of race, to say nothing of their bigotry of sect, would have rebelled against it. Even when the note of universality was sounded at last, it required a vision from heaven to win Peter from his old narrowness. Often Jesus taught in cryptic paradoxes, in flashing repartee, in puzzling parables, and an exposition of a parable was seldom given. Truths partially intelligible, or wholly forgotten, waited to unfold their meaning by way of remembrance.

HIS DISCIPLES REMEMBERED—AND BELIEVED

Not a little of the teaching of Jesus was predictive, and of necessity the interpretation was deferred until the event. Again and again he said: "I have told you before it came to pass, that when it comes to pass ye may believe." In respect to his deepest truth as to his death and its meaning to men, doctrine had to wait on history; the future event was needed for its elucidation. As we may read: "When he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this, and they believed." And again: "These things understood not his disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified then they remembered." Indeed, the Acts of the Apostles is a noble commentary upon this promise, as showing how truths adjourned to a future time were brought to mind. While this ministry of the Spirit had a unique place in the lives of the early disciples, it did not end with them. No; it is a chief glory of Christian

history, in which the resurrection of forgotten truth is a recurrent wonder. Luther remembered a buried truth; Wesley recalled another; Fox another—each reclaiming a truth needed for his day. The living Spirit is our Divine Remembrancer, and his ministry is the life and hope of the church.

How profound this ministry is, both to the church and to the individual, is revealed when we ponder the wonder of memory. Without memory there would be no personal identity, no continuity of life, no growth, no character, only the passing instant, unrelated to aught before or after. Events would die at birth leaving no more impression upon us than is made by the

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

passing image of the moon upon the waters of a lake. Knowledge, duty, love would cease to exist. The child would never master the alphabet; the artisan would have to begin again each day to learn his trade anew; the scholar would be shut out of the temple of history. The mother would forget her babe, the friend his comrade, and "the communion of the saints," so beloved and inspiring, would be a phrase without meaning. No man would know himself, for it is memory that keeps the personality intact and makes the beginning of life in some way fit its course and its ending. Otherwise life would be a medley and a madness. It is memory that strings its fleeting pictures on a thread, giving unity to our else incoherent existence, so that the earliest scenes are more vivid than the passing event. Nay, more; give us but memory and we lose nothing in death. Whereas, if memory be taken from us, there is nothing that is worth keeping in this world or the next.

Suggestions such as these help us to realize, in a manner, the meaning of the reminding office of the Spirit. There are those that speak of memory as though it were a menial faculty, employed to answer the bell and fetch and carry and drudge. Far from it. Much of our life—far more than we are aware—is under the sway of a great world memory, our instincts and habits being a kind of bodily memory in which nature, by the very make of things, records all her doings and forgets nothing. Sometimes we complain that memory is imperfect, if not naughty, but that is to confuse memory with recollection. It is true that we do not always recollect everything, but it is also true that we never really forget anything. Often when we think we have forgotten, a tiny hint—a scent, a sound, a glimpse—resurrects bygone days, bringing back troops of images, lovely or sad, to bless or to torment us. How wonderful is this power which keeps a record of all that we do and say and think, not as we would like to represent it to others, but as it actually and unchangeably has been. For, as we now know, each of us carries a book of judgment and destiny in his own bosom, to be opened and read by the merciful eyes of God. At the last balancing of things, which manifestly are not balanced here, all that will be needed to convict us will be the tender, terrible words, "Son, remember!" What a paradox that some day the menial faculty will ascend the throne and pass judgment upon us, opening the secret scroll of our days and years!

INTIMATIONS WHICH HAUNT THE SOUL

Deeper still is this exceeding great and precious promise for the soul, its memories, dim and strange, as if it were haunted by an unknown past. How exquisite are the lines of Elizabeth Browning when she tells us that she had not "so far left the coasts of life as not to hear the murmur of the outer infinite which babies smile at in their sleep, when wondered at for smiling." Wordsworth thought, not without reason, that the soul, our life-star, had elsewhere its setting, and cometh from afar, and not in entire forgetfulness, but with haunting memories of God who is its home. How arresting, in this setting, are those words of the wise man, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth"—in the morning light when memories of heaven touch the face with an idealism not of earth. Since the days of Plato great thinkers have pondered over the meaning of these august intimations which haunt the soul, which we can never wholly remember and never entirely forget. Plato himself, when at the end of his tether, was wont to speak in parables; but he was very close to the truth when he saw that religion, in its essence, is a memory. Of all those who have dropped a plummet into the depths of memory, none has gone deeper than St. Augustine, the tenth book of whose "Confessions" fills one with amazement. Listen:

> When I wished to find the root of my knowledge of God I came to the great courts of memory. There was the foundation of the light of all other knowledge, and there were the unnumbered treasures displayed of every kind, and there I met all I have discovered by the senses; there came the heavens most richly peopled, there came the earth, the sea, and all that in them is; there I met the unutterable past, and last and greatest

of all I met myself, and all that I have been and done, when and where and how I was and did it, and that is the beginning and the ending of my knowledge of God.

Not otherwise could he account for the idea of God in the mind of man, since it belongs to that tissueless realm whereof no nerve reports. He saw that it is a clinging memory, like Christianity itself, which he said "existed among the ancients, and, in fact, was with the human race from the beginning." Hence the unique and compelling charm of Jesus, for that his appeal was to those old, eternal memories which men had been trying, in many forms of faith, to recall. When he spoke on the mountainside and by the sea it seemed to the men who heard him, as it seems to us today, that their souls spoke to them, reminding them of things which they did not recollect, but which somehow seemed familiar. If our souls leap at his words—which unlock in us chambers accessible to no other speech—it is partly because they echo the voices that whispered about us and within us when life was at its morning; the while he tells us that we must become as little children if we would enter into his kingdom. When we listen to him our joy is mingled with the feeling that his truth is old and familiar, as if, somewhere, we had heard it before. That is to say, there is an element of reminiscence in revelation, of which we have not taken due account.

THE UPPER ROOM—A MEMORY

To the power of memory, as to a recording angel in the soul, Jesus entrusted his name, his gospel, his very person, and his passion for humanity, in a scene of tender beauty in the upper room, on the night before his death. He wrote no book; he organized no church, as we use the word, much less anything akin to the later idea of an ordinance of salvation, with its exclusiveness and its trappings of magic. But with profound insight, and an originality startling in its simplicity, he broke the bread of his body, pouring the red wine of his life and love into the chalice of memory. It was an hour of parting, in which there is always something of the infinite, but it had in it the promise of reunion—"I will see you again"; an ineffable moment, and only a symbol, by which men utter what words can never tell, could express its deep meanings. By an act so artless in its grace, and so haunting in its pathos that it makes the heart ache, he turned a festival of historic memory into a feast of faith and fellowship, linking the heroic faith of his fathers with a loftier revelation of the Father of all; linking, also, all after ages in a mystic continuity of experience and expectation, so that an unbroken tie binds us to him even thus far down the ways of time. No wonder Carlyle saw the majesty of that moment, and amid his burning pictures of the French revolution he paused to note how pale is the pomp of kings beside that peasant group with the loaf and the cup:

> How true also, once more, that no man or nation of men, conscious of doing a great thing, was ever, in that thing, doing other than a small one! Could no atheist contrive to discern, eighteen centuries off, those thirteen most poor mean-dressed men, at a frugal supper, in a mean Jewish dwelling, with no symbol but hearts God-initiated into the divine depth of sorrow, and a "Do this in remembrance of me,"—and so cease that small difficult crowning?

THE INTERPRETER OF LIFE

Each of us has had a token of this truth in our own experience, as the Remembrancer has interpreted to us the often strange medley of our days. Not often are the highest lessons of life learned at the time of the event, so hard is it to see clearly when the eyes are dim and the heart is heavy. At the time we see through a glass darkly; at first we know only in part, and that part is unlovely. Later, in the calm and mellow light of memory, we find a clue to the meaning of our affliction, and we can say, "It was good for me that I have been afflicted." Newman has enshrined this experience in his sermon on "Christ Manifested in Remembrance;" as, long years before, a gay young man of Assisi, touched to wistfulness by the witchery of the sunlight shimmering on the snow, "remembered Jesus," and it broke his heart. Again and again old Bible words, as familiar as the alphabet, have returned to mind in an hour of crisis clothed in new meaning, like a fresh inspiration from heaven. The memory of Bible texts learned when he was a lad changed John Newton from a slave-driver to a hymn-writer. Faust was saved in an hour of passion by the sound of sweet-toned Easter bells. No one can forget the scene in "Jane Eyre" when Rochester is pleading with her to go away with him to the south of France. They loved each other, and to Jane, who had all her life dreamed of such a love, the appeal was almost irresistible. Only the memory of what she had been taught as a little girl saved her in that hour. She said at last:

> Laws and principles are not for the time when there are no temptations; they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigor. Stringent are they; inviolate they shall be. If at my individual convenience I might break them, what would be their worth? They have a worth—so I have always believed; and if I cannot believe it now, it is because I am insane; with my veins running fire, and my heart beating faster than I can count its throbs. Here I plant my foot.

THE CLEANSING OF MEMORY

Can memory be cleansed, once it has been stained and defiled by sin? Assuredly; else for some there could be no such thing as heaven, no respite from an evil past which beclouds the future. Memory is indeed a terrible nemesis, pursuing the prodigal with scorpion whips, as Macbeth learned; but there is a way by which it can be unfanged. Here the insight of Dante goes to the very roots of life and finds the secret spring of redeeming hope. As you recall, in the last circle of Purgatory the escaping soul is given the key to Paradise, but there are two rivers of which he must drink before he can enter into rest. There is the river Lethe—the river of forgetfulness—whose sweet waters cleansed the tormented spirit of those dark memories which threatened to slay hope; and a second river which brought back the joy of youth and the redeeming

grace of old associations. How this can be we do not know; we only know that it is true. There is a river of divine grace wherein if a man bathe his soul, however sinful, the past is purified away. Nor will it haunt him any more, save as a vague, sweet sadness, as of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago."

AN OLD SONG REMEMBERED

There is a story—a true story—in the history of Tennessee of an Indian band who raided a pioneer settlement, and after murdering nearly everybody they carried some little boys off with them into the forest. Years passed, and in a skirmish with the Indians some of their warriors were taken prisoners, among them some men with faces almost white, and two of the mothers came to see if they could find their lost boys. They walked along the line, peering into the wild faces, looking for some trace of family likeness that would identify them, but in vain. An officer asked if they remembered any melody they used to sing to the boys in days of old? One mother went slowly along the line singing the crooning lullaby she used to sing to her little boy. The spirit of other days came back and the song sobbed its way through her heart. All at once a stalwart man, whom the forest had not utterly swallowed up, broke from the line and came cautiously toward her. They looked at each other for an instant, she still singing, and the wild man fell on her shoulder and cried for joy. It was the power of memory—deep calling unto deep—dim, dead days coming back on the wings of lullaby, changing a savage into a little child.

Often that story has been in my thought as a kind of foregleam of a far-off divine day when the Remembrancer has done his perfect work. Searchers of our day remind us that the savage races in all parts of the earth give evidence that behind their grotesque and cruel superstitions lie the fragments of an original belief in a God wholly good, wise, and great. Perhaps the Psalmist had some such truth in mind when he wrote those profound words, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord." What a prophecy, as if at last the redemption of the race is to be a grand reminiscence! Who knoweth the ways of the Spirit, or the power of the love of God to woo to himself those made in his image, whom he never forgets, even though they forget him and wander afar?

Verse

Simon and Judas

HOW dare we look askance at these two men,
Toy with unspoken thoughts, "Were I there then—"
Venture to pity, blame, or mildly scoff?
We, who have struck not once with any sword,
Who have so many times betrayed our Lord,
Nor followed even at a great way off!

KENNETH W. PORTER.

The Teachers

I WENT to school with the tutor, Law,
A master severe and grim,
Who taught by the pain of the biting cane—
Yet learned I little of him.

I go to school with the teacher, Love,
And my lightened eyes can see
What the pain and the tears of the driven years
Could never reveal to me.

C. V. PILCHER.

Talk Faith

TALK faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of Silence all your thoughts till faith shall come;
No one will grieve because your lips are dumb.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Ave Crux, Spes Unica!

MORE than two crosses stand on either side
The Cross today on more than one dark hill;
More than three hours a myriad men have cried,
And they are crying still.

Before Him now no mocking faces pass;
Heavy on all who built the cross, it lies;
Pilate is hanging there, and Caiaphas,
Judas without his price.

Men scourge each other with their stinging whips;
To crosses high they nail, and they are nailed;
More than one dying man with parched lips,
"My God! My God!" has wailed.

Enlarged is Golgotha. But One alone
His healing shadow over all can fling;
One King Divine has made His Cross a Throne.
"Remember us, O King!"

EDWARD SHILLITO.

Let All the Earth Keep Silence

HOW lovely is the silence of green, growing things—
Orchard blossoms, apple, plum, and pear,
Branches laden down by fruit they bear,
Fields of everlasting, creeping vine,
Mountain-forest, hemlock, balsam, pine,
Gentian, asters, sweet-fern on the hill,
All praise Him in their beauty—keeping still.

LUCY A. K. ADEE.

What Kind of Sermons for Today?

By Frederick F. Shannon

I AM glad the editor chose this subject. Getting on badly enough with subjects of my own choosing, I usually fare worse with those selected by another. But if I run true to form in this instance, it will not be due to the editor's choice. For "What Kind of Sermons For Today?" is a timely and vital subject.

I am well aware that many ministers are wondering whether they should be preaching "ringing messages" on these times. Others feel that they should go back to the old landmarks.

I propose that the preacher should do both, and, in some measure, in every sermon. He must be a messenger of today and for today and his message must also flash with the landmark-truths of yesterday. "A large order," you say. "True," I answer, "but the largest order God ever gave to a mortal is to be preacher of the eternal gospel." My conviction is that the gospel of God in Christ has to do with everything in earth, heaven and hell. How, then, shall mere mortals produce sermons throbbing with the realities of the present and conserving the values of the past? If I can answer, even suggestively, at least a beginning will have been made.

● *The Sermon Is the Man*

First, last, and all the time, the sermon is the man. Before there can be anything even romotely resembling a true sermon or preacher, there must be a new type of manhood. He belongs, essentially, to the Christian genus, being a unique product of the spiritually emergent evolution which Christ is carrying on. This preaching type, I hold, is more fundamental than any form of genius, inherited or acquired. Important as are the most splendid gifts for each generation of preachers, no genius, no gifts, however brilliant and various, can be substituted for the christianized genus, or Christ-type, of manhood. Theodore Parker once said that if Christianity is true at all, it would be just as true if taught by Cataline or Herod. That sounds big, liberal, modern, even "debunking," does it not? Yet not for very long! For James Martineau replied that the attempt to combine Christianity with a wicked Christ "is no less absurd than revolting." Now this, it seems to me, is liberal and conservative, unaging with that new-oldness and old-newness which is the essence of reality. It is of yesterday, today, and tomorrow because it is afire with the truth which consumes falsehood.

If, then, the sermon is the man, consider his dimensions. Call him mystic, prophet, pragmatist, poet, or any other convenient epithet, the Christian preacher breathes an atmosphere of ethical and spiritual immensity. It may be said of the preacher, as of no other mortal, that nothing genuinely human or worthily divine is, or can be, foreign

Frederick F. Shannon

to him. For God's prophet and interpreter is not adequately symbolized by cube, square, triangle, or circle, but by life itself. Think, then, of the glowing and glorious forms with which life, in the Christ-possessed preaching-man, clothes itself! The preacher must be a human, a physician, a friend, a psychologist, a vintner, a citizen, a prophet, a spiritual soldier, a Good Samaritan. But only one of two of these points may be stressed in this article.

● *First—the Human Quality*

First, and foremost, the preacher must be a Human. The human quality—a kind of blossoming of the Soul of God over walls of flesh and blood—enables the preacher to sound the deeps of the soul and then open those depths to the life and power of the Infinite Fatherhood. Acquainted with books, the sermon for today must also be profoundly acquainted with human life: acquainted with its grief, acquainted with its joy, acquainted with its value to the Christian God, even if overwhelmed at times by its own confused self-meanings.

But is not this also true of the most effective sermons of yesterday? Augustine is not at his best in pleading for the dogma of original sin. But the centuries will continue to hear his weeping rains of tenderness falling, with pathos and refreshment, upon the dusty roads of the children of men. Find John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards at their noblest. They, too, better than their outmoded philosophies, inevitably break through their inhuman and undivine systems and are out, almost unconsciously, in the heavenly highways of the Christian. As for Schleiermacher, Beecher, Spurgeon, Robertson, Channing, Campbell, Simpson, Storrs—to say nothing of the great living masters of the holy art and science of sermon-making—each knows the path leading straight to the human soul because he himself is opulently and wholesomely human.

All these make you feel, at their highest, that God is closer than breathing because he breathes through them, nearer than hands and feet because God has concretely taken *their* hands and feet. The skies of dawn and sunset, the hush of twilight and the golden star-fires, the songs of birds and the laughter of children, the heartbreak of the rich and the backache of the poor: these are some of the colors staining the texture of sermons for today.

● *The Preacher Today as a Citizen*

Now, on a larger scale than ever before, the preacher is a Citizen. No longer is it true that the citizen is one who merely has full municipal and political privileges, the citizen of today has forthright duties and responsibilities at once fateful and far-reaching. If the inalienable rights of citizenship were once measured by life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, they are now menaced by the strife of tongues, the misunderstandings of nations, and the pursuit of militarism.

Here, once again, the landmarks of yesterday lift their lofty and accusing heads. For however much the externals of society have changed, the internals named righteousness, morality, mercy, and humanity are unchangeable. These are the landmarks belonging to no age or country as such; they are verily "the breath of God in timeless things." And they must be reset with new and compelling power in the roaring, winding, dazzling paths of the present. Moreover, across the face of each this legend should be blazed with

the lightnings of reality: "Stumble over me, O man, and the dooms of the dead—not poetically golden but destructively gruesome—await you and your civilization!" For this is the epitaph, traced by the nature of things, over the grave in which bad will gets itself entombed, having committed individual, national and international suicide.

• *Citizenship Today Is Costly*

This is true of all citizens today, and on a scale never witnessed in the evolution of society. Yet not one carries a heavier responsibility than the preacher-citizen! Like Paul, he may be a citizen of no mean earthly city; or he may be, conversely, a citizen of one of the meanest cities the sun ever shone on. However this may be, the preacher-citizen has the right and duty of claiming citizenship in the City of God. Yet is not this the costliest of all citizenships descending out of heaven from the God of love, justice, and truth?

Ask the preacher-prophets of the olden times! Ask the preacher-apostles of the first century! Ask Athanasius of the exile and Chrysostom of the cave! Ask Dante, the preacher-poet, experiencing the exceeding bitterness of eating another's bread! Ask Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer, who made their beds in a hell of physical flame rather than extinguish the fires of conscience in the groggy, inebriating waters of least resistance! Ask Edith Cavell, whose dawnlike words will forever outspeak the nightlike bullets that killed her: "Patriotism is not enough!"

• *The Preacher as a Foe of War*

Are we not relearning now, with terrible emphasis, that patriotism is not enough? Gladstone held that the most immoral chapters in history are those conceived and practiced by governments. And are they not still at it? Many of them treat the Sermon on the Mount as a scrap of paper. Some of them play with the humanities and moral certitudes as if they were so much material with which to compose nationalistic jazz. Are they not bleeding the peoples white through the colossal cost of wars of yesterday even while furiously piling up enormous armaments for prosecuting wars of tomorrow? So, we are told, the Four Horsemen are ready, even now, to rush forth from their stables of destruction and death.

What part, then, is the preacher-citizen to play in this drama of hell? For one thing, he may choose to run with the winning side! War has at last compelled us to make this confession: It is a game in which everybody loses. Consequently, the only possible winners are those who fight it, and fight it, if need be, unto death. And this—never doubt it!—requires more courage than to be marched bodily into some No Man's Land to be gassed or blown to pieces. Nevertheless, it is the one sure way to get on the winning side, and here, unquestionably, is God's side as well as man's.

• *Stand Up and Be Counted!*

Is not this fact in itself immensely encouraging? Lined up with God and humanity, a natural coward may have enough moral backbone generated within him to look the insane fury off the face of all the devils of war. I say he *may* have, if, by the grace of Christ and a quality of grit he never dreamed was inside his moral epidermis, he definitely chooses to stand up and be counted, dead or alive, with the final victors. For this is the price of the new-old kind of glory that must be paid for ethical and social advance, for the circulation of human and divine values among men. Never, at any time, does the higher conquer the lower except by the irresistible might of vicarious, sacrificial dying. Yet it is a dying that is absolutely deathless!

This, it seems to me, is what Calvary, eternal and historic, is always saying, and saying it with *Love,* which is the nature of God, amid the hatred, agony, earthquake, darkness and death in the world. The angels that sang above Love's cradle may seem to hide their faces while Love is dying. But never fear! Those faces are only seemingly hidden that they may draw a deeper, diviner breath to blow through the resurrection trumpets announcing Love's ultimate, creative and Christlike conquest.

• *Hailing a New and Better Era*

One other thing, among many, the preacher-citizen's sermons may do: They may achieve definite constructive work by showing what is really back of modern war. Animadversion is not enough; sheer condemnation may roar with the backfire of resounding negative; but to set forth, in true teacher-fashion, how the military octopus, in the guise of munitionists, winds its deadly tentacles about peoples, governments, and industry: this is informative and stimulating work tending to show the true patriot how he is being hoodwinked and manipulated by "patrioteers." Once let people know that they are being made fools of by less than a dozen unconscionable and international scoundrels, and something, I sincerely believe, will get afoot in our half-starved world which not even the "World's Greatest Newspaper" shall be able to overtake.

Meantime, let us work and wait for "another era, when it shall be light, and man will awaken from his lofty dreams and find—his dreams still there, and that nothing is gone save his sleep." Therefore,

> Dreamers of dreams, we take the taunt with gladness,
> Knowing that God, beyond the years you see,
> Hath wrought the things that count with you for madness
> Into the substance of the things to be.

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The Task at Hand

A recent would-be reformer writes that when one faces the secret powers allied on behalf of war profits and injustice in this world, one feels "like a fly in a reptile cage." But that helpless feeling is due to abstract thinking about the coming of Utopia. An Irish poet is wiser when he advises his disciple, "Only be thou thyself that goal in which the wars of time shall cease." This end is attained when I have settled what small thing I can do to heal the world's misery, and when I have set myself to do the best I can at that task. Thus is one delivered from the sentimental sadness of inferior minds. I am saved from fear when my heart is set upon the things which the world can neither give nor take away. And God always responds to such effort by giving one something to do which one loves to do. In His will is our peace.

J. Edgar Park.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

BORN in Liverpool, Eng., Rev. J. W. G. WARD was ordained in the Congregational ministry and from 1911 to 1924 ministered to the Emmanuel church, Bootle, Lancashire, and New Court, Tollington Park, London. During the next four years he was pastor of Emmanuel church, Montreal, Can., and in 1928 came to Detroit, Mich., where he ministered at First church. Since 1928 Dr. Ward has been pastor of the First Presbyterian church, Oak Park, Ill. During the war years he was engaged in dramatic, lecture and preaching service in France and Germany. Among his books are "The Master and the Twelve" and "His Last Week."

Rabbi ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN *was born* in the Ukraine. His education was received in the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union college in Cincinnati. Following brief periods of service at the Free Synagogue, New York city, and in Athens, Ga., he led the activities of the Reformed Congregation Keneseth Israel, Philadelphia, for five years. Since 1925 he has been rabbi of the Congregation Beth Israel, Hartford, Conn. His latest book is entitled "The Faith of a Liberal Jew."

Rev. J. STANLEY DURKEE *was born in* Nova Scotia and came to the United States in 1885. Having completed his academic training at Bates college, he was later awarded a Ph.D. at Boston university. Dr. Durkee was ordained in the Free Baptist ministry, and his early pastorates were at Auburn, Me., and Roxbury, Boston, and from 1909 to 1918 he ministered at South Congregational church, Brockton, Mass. Passing from ministerial service to the educational field, Dr. Durkee was president of Howard university, Washington, D. C., for eight years. Since 1926 he has been pastor of the Plymouth Congregational church, Brooklyn, made famous by the ministry there of Henry Ward Beecher.

Since 1904 Rev. JOHN HOWARD MELISH has been rector of the Holy Trinity church, Brooklyn. Having spent several years in study at the University of Cincinnati and at Harvard, Dr. Melish graduated at the Episcopal theological seminary in Cambridge, Mass. For a number of years he served as university chaplain at the University of Cincinnati, and before going to Brooklyn spent four years as rector of Christ church, Cincinnati.

Rev. JOSEPH FORT NEWTON *has ministered* at the Memorial Church of St. Paul and at St. James church, Philadelphia, since 1925. For six years previously he was pastor of the Church of the Divine Paternity (Universalist), New York city. Dr. Newton began his preaching career as pastor of the First Baptist church, Paris, Tex., and later founded and ministered to the People's church at Dixon, Ill. From Dixon he went to Cedar Rapids, Ia., and spent several years there as pastor of the Liberal Christian church. It was from this pastorate that Dr. Newton was called to the famous City Temple, London, where he won wide fame as preacher and prophet. Dr. Newton has written many books, among them, "The Eternal Christ," "Some Living Masters of the Pulpit" and a devotional volume, "Altar Stairs."

Rev. ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE *is minister* at the First Methodist church, Evanston, Ill.

Rev. FREDERICK F. SHANNON *is minister* of the Central church, Chicago.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

CLAUDE ALLEN MCKAY, First Congregational, Binghampton, N. Y. "Wanted: A Prophetic Voice!" Mark 1:3—"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."

JAMES D. KITCHIN, JR., First Christian, Newport News, Va. "Vitamines." Matt. 4:4—"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

JOHN D. CLINTON, First Methodist, Fayette, Ia. "Curvature of the Conscience." 2 Cor. 4:2—"Not walking in craftiness, but commending ourselves to every man's conscience."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

.....

Text used (Write out the text)

.....

Name of minister

.....

Name of church

.....

Address

ANDREW GILLIES, Third Presbyterian, Rochester, N. Y. "The Time to Get Mad." Eph. 4:26—"Be ye angry, and sin not."

SAMUEL J. SKEVINGTON, Temple Baptist, Albany, N. Y. "The Noblest Motive of the Christian Life." Matt. 16:25—"Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

CHARLES A. ROMAND, First Methodist, Newark, O. "Behind Closed Doors." Rev. 3:20—"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

R. FRANK MITCHELL, First Presbyterian, Aberdeen, S. D. "Redemption: The Cost—Plus." Matt. 20:28—"To give his life a ransom. . . . We are bought with a price."

WILLIAM W. PATTON, Congregational, Glen Ridge, N. J. "Religion in the Modern World." Isa. 44:17—"The residue thereof he maketh a god."

WILLIAM T. SWAIN, JR., Presbyterian, Newville, Pa. "The Terrible Meek." Matt. 26:52—"All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Matt. 5:5—"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

CLYDE J. ASKINS, First Baptist, Pittsburg, Kan. "The Homing in the Heart." Prov. 4:23—"Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

JUST WHEN many of us were falling into despair of getting anything done about the unspeakable wickedness of the movies, the Catholic bishops of the nation announce the organization of a "League of Decency" whose bond is a pledge "to remain away from all motion pictures except those which do not offend decency and Christian morality." In the preamble to this pledge each signatory says: "I wish to join the League of Decency which condemns vile and unwholesome moving pictures. I unite with all who protest against them as a grave menace to youth, to home life, to county and religion. I condemn absolutely those salacious motion pictures which, with other degrading agencies, are corrupting public morals and promoting a sex mania in our land. I shall do all that I can to arouse public opinion against the portrayal of vice . . . and against depicting of criminals as heroes and heroines, presenting their filthy philosophy of life as something acceptable to men and women. . . ." This movement revives our hope. It is now under way in every diocese in the nation. Plainly the hierarchy means business. I wish I could join this league. The pledge makes no reference to block-booking and blind-buying, both of which must be destroyed before popular resentment can be expected to register effectively at the box office. This vicious system makes it difficult and often impossible to exercise one's selective option. I went the other night to see that fine film "Death Takes a Holiday" and had to sit through a dirty, rotten and vile depiction of frank animalism before the film I came to see was begun. If Catholics and Protestants cooperate they can easily put a stop to this shameless debauchery.

Catholics Organize Legion of Decency

The Book of the Month

CHARACTER "BAD," *the story of a conscientious objector as told in the letters of Harold Studley Gray. Edited by Kenneth Irving Brown. Harpers. $2.00.*

I CAN IMAGINE that the fourteen thousand ministers who recently pledged their unqualified unwillingness to sanction or support any future war will find this book one of the most interesting human narratives they ever read. Harold Gray was a college student doing Y.M.C.A. work in German prison camps in England when America entered the war. He returned to this country, faced conscription, refused to act as a soldier, taking the position of a conscientious objector to war, and spent fourteen months in prison during which time he went on a hunger strike, was tried by court-martial, convicted and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison, and was released nearly a year after the armistice with a "dishonorable discharge" from the army on the back of which was written, with other data, the remark: "Character, bad." The story of these three years is told in letters written, chiefly, to his mother. The letters lay bare not only the whole chain of events and experiences but the inner reasonings and feelings by which a college youth to whom the Christian faith was no formality but a positive way of life, arrived at his firm position and maintained it through thick and thin in unwavering devotion. Fifteen years after his release, Mr. Gray, with an A.B. and an M.A. from Harvard, two terms of missionary service in China, a banking and a farming experience, and a family of his own, looks back upon his prison term. He would revise somewhat his mode of reasoning, but the great decision which he then made he would make again and more firmly than before. The story reads like the tales of the early Christian martyrs. It will both thrill and solemnize every earnest man who reads it.

A Thought for the Month

I DO NOT THINK that any man can study history profoundly without sensing something incalculable, superhuman, inexorable operating in the long sweep of humanity's ascent through the ages. Little minds, fastening upon fragments of historic fact, may not sense this. But capacious minds, entering imaginatively into the great events of the past, carry with them a sense of awe, as if their study was a dealing with destiny. To the profound historian, man's part in the human drama is magnificent, but it is not primary. There is something else, something superhuman. The all important thing about a great man lies in his background. The great man—Moses, Paul, Augustine, Luther, Wilberforce, Washington, Lincoln, Einstein—is not so much a creator as he is an instrument. He is held in the hand of invisible destiny which seems to have brought him forth at just this moment to break the sealed vessel in which living forces are fermenting to the bursting point. The New Testament itself explains even the career of Jesus in this way. He came in "the fullness of time." History is an integrative process ever rushing toward "fullness," that is, toward readiness for some new creative expression. Men are the medium of this creativity. To sense this fact is to see God and to have dealings with him. And if the fact is sensed not only in the past, but in the living present; not only in the lives of great men, but in the lives of the humblest of us; and not only in events that are worthy of being recorded in what men call "history," but in those events which leave no record at all save in the private experiences of our daily routine; and if we dedicate our powers to the fulfillment of such a destiny—if our lives are felt thus to participate in the incalculable and ineffable will of God, we shall find our peace in his strength and our destiny will be fulfilled in his loving will.

A Divinity that Shapes Our Ends

Charles Clayton Morrison

"The CHRISTIAN CENTURY PULPIT is both a 'Thermometer' and a 'Pilot Flame'"—

writes an Illinois reader of the Pulpit after reading the May number of the publication.

A Colorado subscriber writes: "The Pulpit's monthly visits not only rekindle the fires in my soul, but they also make possible a valued fellowship with the ministry of America."

Other readers have recently written: "Keeps one abreast of the times," "A monthly feast," "Helps to fill in the low places in our thinking," "A positive contribution to ministerial journalism," "A splendid stimulant for ministers."

THE JULY NUMBER of the Pulpit will be a special number in celebration of the union of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of America—with sermons by representatives of both these fellowships.

THE AUGUST ISSUE will be a Reformed Church in America Number.

These issues will include also Preacher Problems articles by men who have attained recognized leadership in the work of the ministry; also a Pastoral Prayer.

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